

# OLD TESTAMENT BIBLICAL LITERACY

## *Lesson 4*

### Genesis – Part Three

### LIFE IN A FALLEN WORLD

#### **I. Background**

As we focus on the lessons of creation in Genesis, we have yet to deal with two important concepts:

- A. We live in a fallen world.
- B. God designed family.

Next week Louis will deal with family. This week we will look at the fallen world.

#### **II. We live in a fallen world**

A. In the Garden of Eden story, we read that God pronounced a number of curses after Adam and Eve sinned against God (Gen. 3: 14-19). Last week, we focused on the curse on the serpent. This week, our focus is with the curse on Earth, Adam and Eve.

- 1. God curses the earth saying, “Cursed is the ground because of you.... It will produce thorns and thistles for you.” (Gen. 3: 17-18).
- 2. God curses man saying man would work for his food “through painful toil” and “by the sweat of your brow” (Gen. 3:17-19).
- 3. God curses woman in both childbearing and struggles in relationship with her husband.

B. We have here some very basic answers to some of life’s most difficult questions.

- 1. What is wrong with this world?
- 2. Why do bad things happen?
- 3. Why is work so stressful?
- 4. Why are relationships so difficult?
- 5. If God is so good, then why is his creation so bad?

C. Let’s see what the Bible says to these questions.

- 1. The Bible teaches clearly that the world is not in the condition God wanted or created it to be. The creation was good. What we have now is a “fallen world” that is under a curse. The curse came about because of man’s sin.

2. While the Bible does not fully tell us God's reasons for these curses, we do know that the curses are the direct result of man's sin and rebellion. There is a strong principle made here: Our actions have an effect upon people and the world around us. We must never think that we can act in a vacuum. Our choices affect many things. For example, we can choose to drink and drive. If we do so, however, and we have a wreck, we should never say "It's God's fault!!"
- D. The world in and of itself has its difficulties. When tornadoes strike, when hurricanes bring death and destruction, we need to remember this world is no longer under our dominion and control. It is now opposed to much we would like to accomplish.
- E. Understanding the curses also leads us into an understanding of the difficulties we frequently encounter in work and life. The pronouncement to Adam that he would farm and get food "through painful toil," "by the sweat of his brow," and in the midst of thorns and thistles explains work and its stresses. Before Adam and Eve sinned, God directly supplied their food and needs. Once man chose to try to direct his own path and walk outside of God's provisions, man was left to work in a world without God's perfection.
- F. A final point to be made from these curses concerns the difficulties that enter into man's and woman's core relationships. The curse is clearly directed first and foremost to woman. As a curse, it sets distance and difficulty in her relationship with her husband. Although the pronounced curse centers there, it clearly extends in effect to husbands as well. Any husband on the planet can tell you that a relationship is a two-way street. More on this later from Louis, the marriage expert.

**III. If the story ended here, then we would have some answers to some perplexing questions, but we would not have any hope. So, it is useful before we leave this study to remember a couple of things:**

- A. God is bigger than the fallen world.
- B. God does not leave us without an ability to cope. Even though there are thorns and thistles, a crop can still be had. Even though it will be painful, woman can still give birth. We are to use the tools God has given us to make this world a better, more hospitable place. These tools include science, natural resources, medicine, etc. To use these to better the world and the lives of peoples is to bring God glory.
- C. We also remember that God promises to remake the world with the Second Coming of Christ.